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Priority: German Patent Application  
198 04 781.9 filed February 6, 1998

Hon. Commissioner of Patents & Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

S I R :

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Submitted herewith is the International Search Report (English language copy enclosed, 3 pages PCT/ISA/210) by the EPO European Patent Office as the international searching authority from the international application listing 6 cited references. The 6 references cited in the International Search Report are believed to have been transmitted to the PTO by the International Bureau (PCT/IB/308). In the event this is not the situation please inform attorney and copies of these references will be filed.

In the International Search Report the references listed in category A mean that these references define the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance with respect to the listed claims. The references listed in category X mean these documents are of particular relevance, and the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when each document is taken alone with respect to the listed claims. For relevance of the references/documents


please refer to the International Search Report (copy enclosed) which is in the English language setting forth the portions of relevance of the references, and three of the references are in the English language, so no further concise explanation should be required.

Copies two additional references namely German Gebrauchsmuster 295 11 492 and European EP 0 836 924 (application No. 97 11 5150) also listed on the enclosed PTO-1449, and disclosed and discussed in the specification page 2+, are presented. These documents are also incorporated by reference in their entirety. European EP 0 836 924 was published after the priority date of the subject present PCT application but before the international filing date, but nevertheless is listed on the enclosed PTO-1449.

In total the accompanying 2 PTO-1449 forms list 8 references, copies of 2 of these references noted in the specification being submitted along with a copy of the International Search Report. Translations of the foreign language references are not available to the undersigned. This submission meets the requirements of 37 CFR §1.56, 1.97 and 1.98(a) and MPEP 609.

Respectfully submitted

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